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*Three Portraits*

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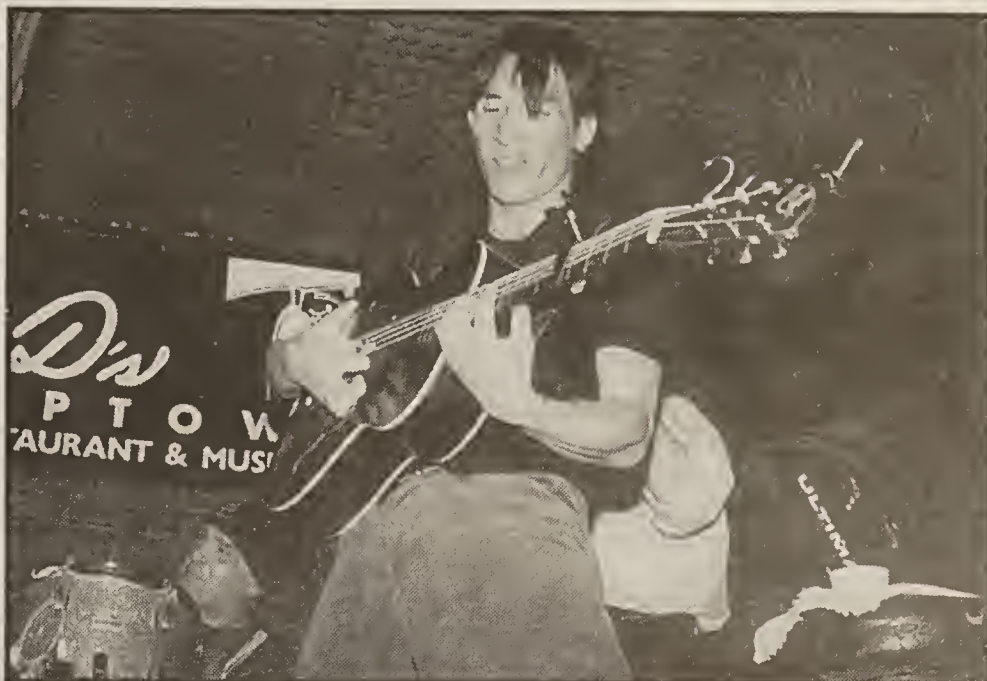
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## COVER STORY



Jeff Song (l) and Kevin So (r) playing last week at Johnny D's.

## Boston's Other Asian Musicians

It's Tuesday night at Johnny D's, a nightclub in Somerville's Davis Square. Tonight's headline act is Kevin So, a high-energy guitar player and singer who performs his own songs for a packed house. Urged on by a loyal following of fans in the audience, So performs a unique blend of soulful blues and folk, leavening his performance with snatches of poetry and dance.

Accompanying So on bass guitar tonight is Jeff Song, a jazz musician who has recorded five CD's of improvisational jazz and has played just about every genre of music from rock to classical. It was Song who last year founded the first Boston Asian American Creative Music Festival.

So and Song are just a few of the Asian American musicians playing jazz and folk music in the Boston area. While people may often associate Asian Americans with classical music, a growing number of Asians are challenging that stereotype by branching out into new areas of American popular culture. The number of Asians playing jazz, for example, is growing, and So's sally into blues and folk is nothing less than groundbreaking.

One of the few Asian Americans playing blues and folk at clubs and festivals across the US, the Allston-raised So was nominated for a 1996 Boston Music Award for Best Contemporary Folk Act, and was a 1997 New Folk Finalist. A graduate of the University of Southern California, where he studied music, the 27-year-old So says music has always been a part of his life.

Like many Asian Americans playing popular forms of music, So's interest in music goes back to childhood. He remembers riding into Chinatown with his family to have dim sum and hearing his father singing Chinese songs to cheer everyone up if there was a problem or disagreement. It dawned on him that "music really has a healing power," he says.

Though So has been playing guitar and singing since he was 16, his earliest popular music interests leaned more toward late-1970s black music. The first record he ever bought was a greatest hits album by the Commodores. And he remembers the excitement of hearing Michael Jackson's "Off the Wall" album for the first time during a trip to his cousin's house. Earth Wind and Fire was also an early musical interest. In those days, he says, it was the drive and rhythm of the music that caught his attention. Music and dance went together and this was music you could dance to, he says.

Over time, So's musical interests grew in other directions as well. A turning point for him musically was his discovery of the work of the legendary Bob Dylan, America's preeminent singer-songwriter. Dylan's music "changed my life," says So, who identified with the Dylan persona for a number of reasons. Dylan, he says, represented the voice of the underdog. He was like a David fighting a Goliath, he says. "I felt a connection." Growing up Asian American, he says, could easily make you feel like an outsider sometimes. Maybe you weren't as big as the next guy and you felt you were at a disadvantage. Dylan was just a skinny guy. He wasn't very big, but he spoke for the oppressed, for the outsiders.

Race is unavoidable in America, So says. It's always an issue. "I feel it every day." People tell him he shouldn't let it bother him so much, but he

says he finds it hard to ignore. He recalls walking down the street not long ago when two white panhandlers approached him for money. They got angry when he passed by them without giving them something. They started hurling racial slurs at him. He hadn't done anything to them but was just walking down the street minding his own business. People say race relations in America are getting better, but sometimes he wonders.

There's still too many people who are out of touch with multicolored America, he says. In the white suburbs, for example, people still don't know how to relate well to Asians or blacks. White kids may be listening to African-American inspired hip hop but they feel uneasy around black people. The same isolation, he says, can also apply to Chinatown where people tend to remain isolated and sometimes suspicious of non-Chinese. He suggests that racial isolation in America often has its source in lack of knowledge, which leads to fear, which in turn leads to anger. In response to the anger, people want to isolate themselves from each other, but retreat will never provide a permanent solution, he says.

So isn't one to stay isolated within his own race. He likes the diversity of America. His best friends include an Asian, a black, and a white. The audience at his concert at Johnny D's last week was mostly white and Asian. He always had Chinese friends when he was growing up, he says, but he also liked to branch out and mingle with others too. "I was never in the Chinese clique," he says. Even now, he says, he feels a genuine sense of power walking down the street with his racially diverse friends.

The lyrics of his songs tell the same story. In the title song of his CD, "Individual," So emphasizes the importance of tolerance. "Just because my hair is a little longer/Just because my skin is a little darker/Just because my eyes are a little smaller who are you to judge me...I see a white man in the middle/ Black man left and the yellow man right/ Though they are three strong individuals/They'll stand stronger side by side."

So says he's making a living playing music, touring around the country and playing in clubs from Arkansas to Colorado to California, but he feels he can't waste any time now. He doesn't have a day job but making ends meet as a musician isn't easy. "I'm barely surviving. I'm working really hard," he says.

Even though he believes that race doesn't really have much to do with the music he makes, he feels that being Asian American will make it that much harder to succeed as a musician. A friend recently told him that now is an important time for him. "He told me I have to go for it now." Why? "Because you're Asian you have to work twice as hard."

"I think it just takes time," he says. "It's a white man's world and it's always been that way."

So, nevertheless, says he remains optimistic. "I see a light at the end of the tunnel," says So, who is eager to get more Asians to support live music and to go out to local clubs to listen to him and other musicians. "I would like to see more Chinese people in my audience," says So, who considers it a personal responsibility to let non-Asians know that Asians can sing the blues and make it as singer-songwriters. He feels a certain elation when people hear him singing and realize he's

Chinese.

So says the two CDs he has made are sitting in people's homes right now. "I'm probably the only CD in their collection who is Chinese," says So, who knows of only two other Asian Americans - one in San Francisco and another in New York - who are playing music similar to his own.

Though he has "been pegged as a folk singer," he doesn't necessarily see himself that way, explaining that he doesn't like to limit himself to one category. He says he is even considering adapting his songs to be played with the rhythms of funk and R&B. So says he's comfortable sitting in Jordan Hall listening to a classical quartet or listening to gospel. He played violin for six years and still enjoys classical music, he says. Classical music requires much discipline and So believes long-term success in life requires it.

So says it hasn't always been easy convincing his parents of the rightness of his career choice. His parents were born in China and ran a restaurant in Lynn for 25 years. Neither really liked the American music he grew up with and has since decided to play. His mother was often skeptical, telling him that it would be difficult for him to succeed playing American popular music because he was Chinese and criticizing his singing voice. He admits that some of the criticism was hard to take. "My mom says, 'I just don't like that music,'" he says. While his parents often helped him financially over the years, they didn't really approve of his career choice. His father supported him, he says, but he preferred other types of music. His parents listened to Chinese pop, "music that's from their childhood," he says. People, he adds, listen to music that's familiar to them and drawn from their youth.

In the Chinese community he grew up in, he says, success was often equated with financial rather than artistic success. In his own family, his career choice has been less lucrative than that of his siblings. His brother, for example, is a doctor and his sister works in a bank. "Growing up in my community success was about how much money you made," says So. "I have to constantly keep reminding myself that success is a word."

### Scientist by Day, Musician by Night

Like many local Asian American musicians, bass player Jeff Song knows how hard it can be to earn a living as a musician in the Boston area. A "self-taught" research scientist at a Cambridge bio-tech firm by day, Song is by night a musician who was accompanying Kevin So on bass at Johnny D's last week.

A Korean American, Song came to Boston from Des Moines, Iowa, in 1982 to study anthropology at Boston University and eventually music at the New England Conservatory of Music. He has made five CDs, and describes his improvisational music as avant-garde jazz. "I guess it's an acquired taste," says Song, who has played in jazz and rock bands and for a while made his living solely as a musician, often playing in "lots of wedding bands."

When his wife went back to school seven years ago, Song had no choice but to take a day job. And with the birth of his first child in September, a Continued on page 4



## COVER STORY

Continued from page 3

full-time day job became a necessity. Playing in wedding bands, he says, "was not that fulfilling for me."

"I feel I've been juggling day jobs vs. music for much of my life," says Song, who began playing piano when he was 8 and started studying cello in the fourth grade. A classical music student for 10 years, Song discovered the bass guitar in the late 1970s. Like many youthful Asian American musicians, Song discovered that studying classical music was encouraged by his parents but exploring popular musical forms was considered a less noble calling.

"For my parents' generation, classical music is more legitimate," says Song, who adds that for his Korean-born parents it may have been OK to go to Juilliard and become another Yo-Yo Ma, but not acceptable to be a player in a rock or jazz band. "It was not a happy time to make that choice," he says of his decision to explore popular music. Song believes that the parental "support will get better with each generation." If his son Jacob "decides to be a musician he's going to have a sympathetic ear that I didn't have," he says.

In an effort to show that "Asian Americans are really contributing to every genre of music out there," Song last year founded the first Boston Asian American Creative Music Festival, which will be held for the second time at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center in the fall. While last fall's festival performers were for the most part Asians, non-Asians whose music has been influenced by Asian forms also took part. Song says the music and the spirit of the playing was actually "more important than any actual race of the performers."

The Asian Music Festival "is not a 'world music' festival," says Song, who also performs and records non-traditional music on the kayagum, a Korean 12-string zither. Song points out that musicians "performing on traditional Asian instruments should be doing so in a non-traditional context." One goal of the festival is to present musicians "who offer their own personal and often provocative visions of music that draw on Asian American experiences... Another goal of the festival is to break through boundaries of color and challenge cultural ideas about how we define identity and ethnicity."

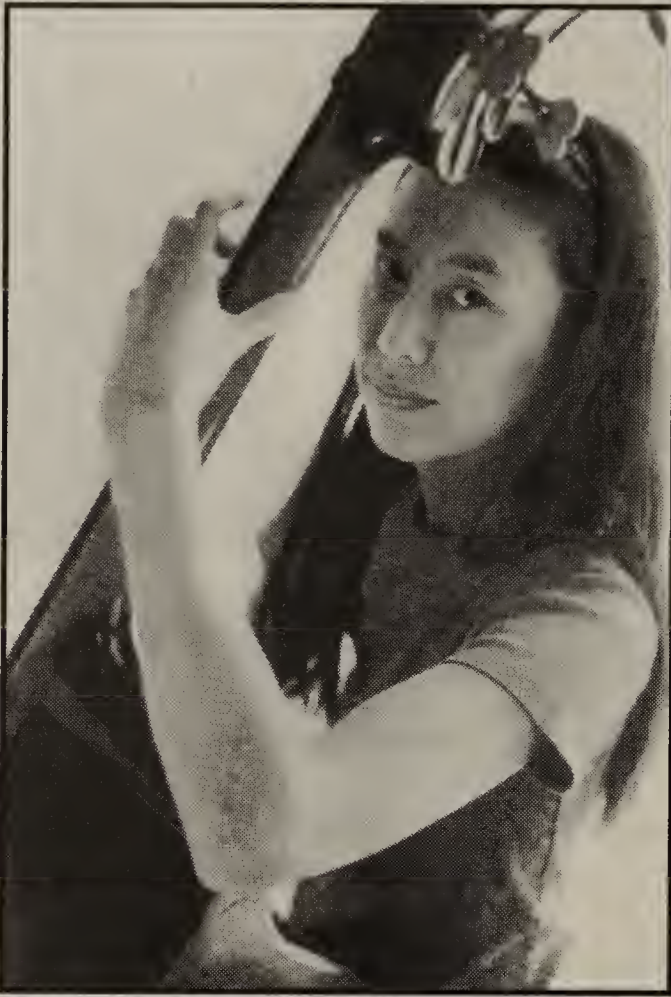
Ironically, the Asian character of the festival has turned away some Asian American musicians, who say they don't want to be associated with a "race specific" event. Musicians want to be considered good players above and beyond their racial identity, Song says.

"Frankly, I'm still not sure it's a good thing or not," he says of the Festival's Asian emphasis, adding that he is still unsure whether an Asian venue helps Asian Americans or perpetuates their status as novelty acts. Song, nevertheless, believes that providing local Asian musicians with any opportunity to perform is good enough reason to hold the festival. In a more perfect world, such a festival would perhaps be unnecessary, he says. "If race issues didn't exist then we wouldn't need to have an Asian American Music Festival," he says.

Like So, Song says race continues to be an issue for many Asian Americans and sometimes for Asian American musicians. And while many people may suggest that race relations have been changing for the better in America, Song says he isn't so sure that's true. "I don't think it's changed too much at all," he says, citing a recent MSNBC Internet headline suggesting that figure skater

Michelle Kwan wasn't an American. "It's very disturbing," he says.

"In America you are treated a certain way because of the way you look," says Song, who adds that So "wrote this great song" about the Kwan incident.



Jane Wang

While Asian American musicians aren't necessarily playing music that has a specific Asian musical influence, many may draw on their experiences growing up Asian or living in the US. Kevin So, for example, plays music that is American to the bone yet his lyrics certainly suggest his experience as an Asian American, Song says. It's this crossing of racial and cultural boundaries that seems to intrigue Song and other Asian American musicians.

Though there are few Asians performing folk and blues, Song says "it's not unusual to see Asian jazz musicians" in Boston, in part because there are many Japanese musicians who come to Berkeley College of Music in Boston to study. "I think it's growing a lot and that's a good thing." Because the number of Asian jazz musicians has been growing over the years, race is less likely to be a significant issue for them. And while Asians are slowly making inroads into popular musical genres such as rock and hip hop - Cibo Matta, for example, is two Japanese women who record hip hop on a major label - there's always the danger that Asian performers will be turned into novelty acts. "Can musicians be considered just good performers and good artists" and "rise above novelty status"? Song asks. Being unique can work for a performer but "at the same time it's kind of bittersweet recognition," he says.

#### A Woman in Jazz

For jazz musician Jane Wang, the fact that she is Asian has little to do with her music. When she was growing up in the Boston area, she says she would cringe when she heard Peking Opera and generally rejected that side of

her heritage. "I think a lot of Chinese people hate Chinese culture," she says, adding that for her "a lot of it has to do with the way women were treated in Chinese culture." Her parents, she says, also were critical of Chinese culture and appeared eager to start new lives here. And while she says she still has "problems with it (Chinese culture)," she says she recently attended a concert by jazz musician Fred Ho that made her think differently about it. "I'm just starting to feel there's something there I can enjoy," she says. "I actually went to see Fred Ho's show in New York and he had a Chinese singer and I really like it."

Wang suggests that Chinese families have complex attitudes towards music. "My brother and his wife really want the kids to study music like violin or piano," she says. "But it's like, god forbid you want to make it your profession." Moreover, classical is generally an acceptable genre to pursue, with musicians such as Yo-Yo Ma receiving adulation. But jazz and rock are often held suspect.

"I think classical music is almost like a more white thing," she says. "It's more upper class - or, at least, it's perceived that way." Popular American music - much of which has been inspired by African-American rhythms - is less likely to be accepted. Wang suggests that white parents may hold similar views.

Leaving a secure working life for the unpredictability of a jazz musician's life wasn't a decision easily accepted by Wang's mother. "She feels it's a very insecure way of making a living," says Wang, who adds that jazz and popular music in general may be associated in her mother's mind with drugs and alcohol. In Chinese culture, "painters are respected, musicians are almost prostitutes" or "street people," she says. Her mother, she says, "has an idea of what a respectable job is."

After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1979, Wang worked for seven years as a software engineer. She left that job to become a boom operator in the film industry. Nine years ago she decided she wanted to return to music. She had played piano into her early 20s and had long been interested in jazz. Wang took lessons in acoustic bass and now plays improvisational-style jazz regularly at the Malimo Restaurant on Massachusetts Avenue between Harvard and Central Squares and at Spontaneous Celebration in Jamaica Plain.

She has created her own record company (Hao Records) and has produced three CDs, including "In a Stranger's Hand," on which she performs with a group of Japanese musicians; and "Laundry for the Nineties," where she plays as a member of the Lydian People's Front. Leaving secure jobs with steady incomes was a big risk for Wang, who has been living largely on her savings since venturing into the music world.

As an Asian jazz musician Wang says she has never felt discrimination. Sometimes she believes being Asian can be an advantage. "Asians are a little more acceptable in certain kinds of black circles," she says.

Wang says a recent article in the music press highlighted the growing profile of Asian jazz musicians. She says she sees more Asian jazz musicians these days but doesn't know why their number is growing. She speculates that it could be connected to their growing participation in American life and culture. "As Asians become more assimilated into the culture they get more into the music of this culture and that includes black music," she says.

-Robert O'Malley

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## STORIES

## Finding Her American Dream

By Cecilia Wong

Like tens of thousands of immigrants before her, Jin Kyu Robertson came to America to pursue her dreams. Born and raised in South Korea, she came to the United States at the age of 22 to work as a nanny for a New Jersey family. Now, more than two decades later, both Robertson and her 21-year-old daughter, Jasmin Cho, are students at Harvard University. Robertson is a Ph.D. candidate in History and East Asian languages, while Cho, a junior, is a double major in government and East Asian studies. Both mother and daughter speak fluent Korean, Japanese and English.

Robertson says America is a country "full of opportunities." For anyone who wants to be somebody - who has a goal and is willing to work hard for it, the opportunities here are limitless. As a teaching fellow at Harvard, Robertson has taught tutorial courses in modern Chinese and Japanese history, culture, economics, and politics. She says she often expresses to her students her optimism about America, which she sees as an "equal opportunity" country for anyone who wants to succeed. In terms of her own career, Robertson believes America has so far lived up to her expectations. "I think it's a dream come true," she says.

Eager to escape the limited roles available to women in her home country 27 years ago, Robertson sought the help of an agency run by two Korean brothers who served as a go-between for American families seeking to employ housemaids from South Korea. Since she hadn't come from a rich family, her parents couldn't afford to send her to college. After she received a high school diploma, Robertson started working at a hairpiece factory. "[Back then], in Korea, the role of women fitting in society was very limited," she added. "Since I believe in equal opportunity, America will give me a chance to succeed."

Robertson pointed out that as a 22-year-old woman, she was worried that the brothers might try to sell her into prostitution. Her parents were also frightened by the thought that she might end up as a prostitute in the United States. "But it was a risk I had to take," Robertson said, "because I was determined not to live as a second-class citizen in Korea and die in humiliation as an obedient wife."

"I'll kill myself if I ended up in bad people's hand, but at least let me try," she thought to herself. Thus her parents scraped together enough money for her to buy an airline ticket and to have \$100 left over for spending money. When you are desperate, the worst fear is not so much that you might end up in the wrong hands, but that you might miss the opportunity, Robertson explained. "What if I couldn't go at all?" she asks. Even after she had boarded the plane to the United States, she says, she was still wondering whether it was all a dream.

The brothers advised Robertson to check into a hotel upon her arrival in New York City. She said she stayed in an inexpensive motel for \$18 a night. On the following day, she was met by her host family - a white woman in her mid-60s, her two grandchildren (a boy and a girl), and her son, an attorney who signed all the papers. "They liked me, and took me to their home in New Jersey," Robertson said. Later she learned that her sponsor had already hired a nanny for the children. They couldn't wait any longer, Robertson explained, because it had taken her two years to get her visa/passport clearance. As a result, Robertson was free to go off on her own. With \$70 in her pocket, she left New Jersey and made her way to New York City.

## Finding a Job

Several Korean women living in the Bronx happened to be looking for a roommate, so Robertson moved in with them and began her new life in New York City. With \$70 in her pocket, she was worried about how to support herself in America. With the help of her next door Thai neighbors, she managed to land a job as a hostess at a Wall Street restaurant.

After working the afternoon shift for about two months, the owner asked her if she would be interested in working in the evening. She promptly said yes. "The owners and customers liked me," Robertson said. "I'd lost some weight and was down to 110 pounds, and I looked so cute."

Working the evening shift, Robertson didn't leave work until 10:30 p.m. Every night, she had to walk through a black neighborhood where groups of men stood on street corners. "Hi, baby," they would say. Instead of feeling threatened, Robertson was happy to encounter friendly people. "I was so happy and gratified," she said. "I'm alive with these ... people, and they're talking to me. I hope I'm not in a dream." She said she wasn't the least bit afraid because she was new to the country and was enamored of everyone she met and everything she saw. Sometimes "ignorance is bliss," she says.

Robertson said as soon as she made a little money she would immediately send it home. "I wanted to prove to my parents that I'm no prostitute," she said. "I wanted my parents to be proud of me." She also wanted to share her excitement with them.

Earning more money on the evening shift, she bought herself a radio and a television for the first time. She also wanted to pay off the loans that her parents had borrowed for her passage to America as well as help her younger brothers in South Korea.

Four months into her new shift, Robertson encountered some Korean customers who asked her why she hadn't considered working for a Korean restaurant. They told her that there was a brand new one at 6th Avenue and 56th Street, one of the best Korean restaurants in town. Robertson told them that she had no waitressing experience, but they said they would train

her. So she left the Jewish-owned restaurant and began waitressing at the new Korean restaurant.

At her new job, Robertson had to wear the traditional Korean dress. She was making \$500 to \$600 per month. In 1971, she says, \$600 was a lot of money. At that point, Robertson said, "I was looking for ways to go to college."

She enrolled in the City College system's Bernard Baruch College, where she took two English courses and a mathematics course. She passed the two English courses and excelled in mathematics. She said her school counselor then advised her to take courses in marketing and music. Being a newcomer to this country, Robertson lacked perspective on American culture. And marketing, she explains, is steeped in culture. "I was so poor, I wasn't familiar with any American products...I didn't have any idea of what Chevrolet or the Rockefeller Foundation was," Robertson said. "Nothing made any sense at all, it didn't come out in the book."

"I was sitting in the class and struggling through it," Robertson said. She said she shed many tears in that class. Then one day Robertson had the opportunity to talk to her instructor. She told him that despite spending long hours preparing for the class, she hadn't a clue as to what he was saying in class. The teacher gave her some extra help after class, and she received a B for her final grade. The best part at City College, Robertson said, was that she took calculus and did well in the course. After attending college in New York for two years, her friends persuaded her to move to Los Angeles in 1974.

As Robertson recalls, the weather was great in L.A. The Olympic Boulevard was lined with rows of palm trees, and the air was beautiful and clean. There were lots of Koreans living in L.A. "I felt great, because no one was looking down on me. I

felt equal to everyone," Robertson said. "I finally felt vindicated and I was happy for that."

It was while working as a cocktail waitress at a Korean bar in L.A. that Robertson met her future husband - the father of Jasmin. One evening a Korean guy visited the bar with his friends. A black belt in Aikido, he came to L.A. to participate in a tournament. Robertson said she thought he was handsome. Later, she found out that the guy with the black belt had been looking for her for a week. She was only working on Friday and Saturday nights, making just enough money to pay the rent and college tuition at California State University in L.A.

Robertson finally married the Korean black belt. "I believe in women's lib, but [my husband] is a conservative guy," she said. Although Robertson's husband was trained in martial arts, he didn't speak any English, so his business wasn't flourishing. He opened a martial arts studio and did a bit of carpentry on the side to earn extra cash. Robertson got a job as an accountant. After seven years of marriage, they had a son and a daughter. Eventually they moved to Seattle to join her husband's friends there.

Seattle was a big city, Robertson said. The weather was beautiful; the mountains were tall; and the people were very nice. But one day her car broke down on the highway, and for the first time since she was in America, she felt "poor." She wanted to split up with her husband who decided to return to South Korea with the children.

## Joining the Military

Robertson joined the U.S. Army in the fall of 1976. The best part about the army, Robertson said, was that when she put her heart and soul into her training, it produced results. "I was so good in ironing my uniform and polishing my boots until they shined that I stood out among the 200 cadets," she added. "I became the number one among 200 trainees."

She went through specialty training as an enlisted soldier with no college degree. Put in charge of specialty supply, Robertson was responsible for logistics, accounting, and acquisition forms. To complete her training, she enrolled in a self-paced course. Normally it takes five weeks to pass 15 tests, but Robertson made it through in 15 days and did well in all 15 exams. "The whole place was watching for my record-setting 100 percent test scores," Robertson said.

The U.S. Army eventually dispatched Robertson to South Korea. "I was very happy to see my daughter again ... she didn't recognize me. My parents were in tears. I was wearing the U.S. Army uniform, and I wasn't able to get through ... I was in a very emotional state," Robertson said. "I was hoping that it wasn't a dream, a dream that I'm going wake up from."

In 1986, Robertson applied for a position as a North-East Asian specialist (a foreign liaison officer) in Japan. She made a special trip to Washington D.C. to find out why her application for that position was turned down. She also wanted some advice on what she could do to improve her chances of getting that assignment.

According to Robertson, her superiors in D.C. said her request was turned down because she was a woman. They said jokingly, "Japanese and Korean men don't want to do business with a woman, if we send you there, it's not going to be effective." Robertson didn't make a big fuss about it; she just listened quietly, then reminded her superiors that she had just come from Korea, where she had been a company commander in charge of a 200-man platoon.

Her superiors knew about her outstanding track record. While she was company commander in Korea, she experienced very little resistance from the men under her because she was well-informed, cared about her job, and spoke fluent Korean.

Continued on page 6



Jin Kyu Robertson (r) with her daughter, Jasmin Cho, at Harvard University.



## STORIES

### Finding Her American Dream

Continued from page 5

In fact, "I gave the Korean men an ego-boost," Robertson said. "I had the power to sign pay checks, to make recommendations for promotion. And even American GIs were taking orders from me, a Korean woman, and it helped solve the problem of playing favoritism." Furthermore, she added, "I understand human psychology and needs; I'm able to empathize with the other party, and we work and prosper together." Robertson said she enjoyed great success in her job because she was loyal and devoted to the tasks at hand.

Robertson told her superiors: "Let me be the first guinea pig." Her strategy worked. Soon they were sending her to a language school to learn Japanese and graduate school to learn more about East Asia. She applied to Harvard University in 1988 and was admitted in the fall of 1989. Robertson had to defer her enrollment at Harvard in order to attend a language school in Monterey.

Robertson said learning Japanese was relatively easy for her because she knows Korean and the languages have certain similarities. She also helped her fellow officers with mastering the language. Once again she made the highest grade in the language exam. No one has ever achieved those kinds of record-setting exam scores.

Robertson completed her graduate degree in East Asian regional studies at Harvard in 1992, and was dispatched overseas to Japan where she was the first woman to serve as a liaison officer for the defense force. She spent four and half years in Japan. Her role was to minimize misunderstanding between the Japanese and American forces.

According to Robertson, Japanese society emphasizes social life: social drinking, singing karaoke, and playing golf all play a role in developing relationships. Robertson participated in all these social functions, going to dinner, drinking with the men, stopping at the first, second, and third drinking spots to socialize. She also sharpened her golf skills, playing on Saturdays and Sundays - the days that American officers preferred to spend with their families.

"It became so important to these [Japanese officers]," Robertson said. "It smoothes the path, creating human relationships." Robertson said she became such an important connection to them that they sometimes discussed important matters with her.

Robertson said her message to people is that a woman can do anything she wants. A woman, she says, can effectively combine management and human relationship skills.

America is full of opportunities, she said. If a person wants something badly enough, he or she shouldn't take "no" for an answer. "My superiors had the wrong perception that women are not as competent or effective as men in terms of doing business in the Far East," Robertson said. "I wanted to prove them wrong." And while she admitted that a woman has to work harder than men, she refuses to allow herself to be constrained by the "glass ceiling." She pointed out that she went to Washington to open up a dialogue with her superiors. She accomplished her goals by establishing effective human relationships. The result was that she finally got what she wanted.

Robertson said she also wants to change an American misconception that Asian men don't want to do business with women, she added. "I consider opening doors for other women to be one of the highlights of my life...and even going through all those obstacles was worth it," Robertson said.

Robertson is currently working on a memoir spanning three generations of her family: her father, herself, and her daughter. She has completed the first draft about her father's generation. She said she did a lot of research on forced labor in Japan, learning in the process that her father was practically abducted to Japan to work in the mines. It was very dangerous, she said. He could have been killed at any moment.

She said the professors at Harvard are very excited about her book because it contains much information on forced labor during the World War II period. Robertson said Koreans of her father's generation were treated like slaves and were at the bottom of the barrel, she said. But during her assignment to Japan, she was the VIP; everywhere she went, she was welcomed and praised, allowing her the opportunity to see her life from a new perspective.

## See the Housing Feature in the May 15 Sampan

### MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY TRANSPORTATION BUILDING 10 PARK PLAZA BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116-3975

#### NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed bids for MBTA Contract No. U16CN01, REPLACEMENT OF HVAC UNITS, S1 and S2, McSweeney Bus Garage, Charlestown, MA will be received by the Deputy Director of Construction, Contracts, at the Contract Administration Office, 5th Floor, Room 5610, Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, Massachusetts, 02116-3975, until two o'clock (2:00 p.m.) on **April 30, 1998**. Immediately thereafter, in a designated room, the Bids will be opened and read publicly.

Work consists of removal and replacement of existing heating, ventilation and air conditioning Units S1 and S2, with new units, electrical, mechanical and other related work.

Bidding documents may be obtained from the Contract Administration Office at the address above, on **April 10, 1998**, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at a charge of \$25 per copy. The Authority's STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS, BIDDING AND CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS AND DIVISION 1 - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS dated November, 1983, is available at a charge of \$5.00 per copy. Authority's STANDARD SPECIFICATION, CONSTRUCTION, dated January, 1980, is available at a charge of \$15.00 per copy. Bidding documents will be sent upon request and receipt of an additional fee of \$15.00, payable by separate check. Bidding documents will be forwarded by Air Freight, where such service is available, at the expense of the plan holder. **NONE OF THESE CHARGES ARE REFUNDABLE.**

Bidders attention is directed to Appendix 1, Goals and Timetables for Female and Minority Participation in the Construction Industry; and to Appendix 2, Supplemental Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, and Affirmative Action Program in the specifications. In addition, pursuant to the requirements of Appendix 3, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Participation Provision, Bidders must submit an assurance with their Bids that they will make sufficient and reasonable efforts to meet the stated DBE goal of 10 percent.

Bidders will affirmatively ensure that in regard to any contract entered into pursuant to this solicitation, minority and female construction contractors will be afforded full opportunity to submit Bids and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin in consideration for an award.

Bidders will be required to comply with Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Regulations and the President's Executive Order No. 11246 and any amendments or supplements thereto.

Authorization for the Bidders to view the site of the work on the MBTA's property shall be obtained from the Project Manager, Robert R. Fagone at (617) 222-5233. The Authority will conduct an inspection tour of the site on **April 17, 1998**. Bidders are requested to be present in the Bus Operations Conference Room, Second Floor, McSweeney Bus Garage, Charlestown, MA at 10:00 A.M. to participate in the tour. Bidders are advised that they should have representation at this tour as no extra visits are planned.

A prebid conference will be held on **April 17, 1998** at 11:00 A.M. at the Bus Operations Conference

Room, second floor, McSweeney Bus Garage, Charlestown, MA.

Any request for interpretation of the Plans and Specifications should be submitted in writing at the same time.

Bidders will be required to certify as part of their bids that they are able to furnish labor that can work in harmony with all other elements of labor employed or to be employed on the work.

This Contract is subject to minimum State wage rates as well as all other applicable labor laws.

Bid Guaranty shall consist of a bid deposit in the amount of five (5) percent of the value of the bid, in the form of a bid bond, cash, certified check, treasurer's or cashier's check.

The successful Bidder shall be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Labor and Materials Payment Bond each for the full amount of the Contract price.

The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all Bids, to waive informalities, to advertise for new Bids or proceed to do the work otherwise, as may be deemed to be in the best interests of the Authority.

This information may be viewed at the MBTA website : <http://www.mbta.com/info/>

Plans and specifications may also be viewed at the following locations:

Massachusetts Alliance for Small Business	Old Colony Communications Office
One South Station 3rd Floor	395 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02110	Braintree, MA 02184

Women's Business Enterprise Alliance  
P.O. Box 132  
385 Blue Hill Drive  
Westwood, MA 02090

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Date, **April 10, 1998**

By: Patrick J. Moynihan  
Secretary and MBTA Chairman

Robert H. Prince, Jr.  
General Manager



## CITY

# CCBA Never Repaid Misused Money

When the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) was given money by Chinatown medical institutions to purchase the SCM building at 50 Herald Street in 1985, it agreed to use the community benefit to develop "new" affordable housing for the Chinese community.

But between 1991 and 1995, CCBA was using rental income and interest generated from the building to cover its own expenses, which included banquets, legal fees, and expenses associated with a volleyball tournament. And while the money from the account was apparently taken with the intention of someday repaying the fund, none of the estimated \$672,398 in community housing funds used during that five-year period has been paid back.

In recent years CCBA has been renting the SCM building to the 88 Supermarket and using the money to repay loans the organization took out several years ago to finance the purchase of Tai Tung Village, a 214-unit housing complex in Chinatown. The Herald Street building has been generating an estimated \$100,000 in annual income for CCBA.

Although using the money to purchase Tai Tung Village has been justified by CCBA's lawyers as well as some members of the Chinese community as an appropriate use for the SCM money - including CCBA's former auditor Paul Chan - the SCM money that was spent prior to the Tai Tung purchase has never been adequately accounted for by CCBA officials. While the CCBA Council annually approved the spending of the SCM money, the issue was never brought to the broader Chinese community to determine its views on the matter.

In the past, CCBA officials have either been reluctant to talk about the issue or said they knew little about it. Moreover, no one in the Chinese community has come forward to protest the blatant misuse of the funds by CCBA or called for a full accounting of how the money was spent over the years. CCBA's new president, Robert Leung, declined to talk with the Sampan about how the money was spent, saying he didn't have to reveal such financial information to the newspaper. Leung, who has only been CCBA's president for about three months, also said he wasn't well enough informed on the SCM issue to discuss it.

While many members of the community can rationalize using the money to purchase Tai Tung Village - even though the purchase did not create "new" housing - few could justify its use for banquets and strictly CCBA affairs.

A Memorandum of Understanding signed by CCBA, the Trustees of Tufts College, and the New England Medical Center in 1983 states that the building was to be used to increase affordable housing in the Chinese community.

"The Association agrees to use such funds only to increase the availability of adequate affordable housing within Chinatown and its immediate environs," the Memorandum states. The SCM building was given to CCBA on behalf of the Chinese community in return for Chinatown support for several institutional building projects in the Chinatown area in the 1980s.

CCBA lawyers concluded that SCM money could be used to purchase Tai Tung Village because its purchase was meant to preserve the housing development's long-term affordability after a federal mortgage expires in 2014, according to former CCBA president Wilson Lee.

Although there is no restriction in the deed requiring Tai Tung Village to remain affordable after the HUD mortgage expires, the Tai Tung tenants who asked CCBA to purchase the housing complex apparently believe that a community organization such as CCBA will be less likely to take advantage of the building's projected rise in value after 2014, said former CCBA auditor Paul Chan. He said some understanding was reached between CCBA and HUD that CCBA would help the residents convert the building to resident-owned cooperatives. "Compared to other uses, CCBA putting that money into Tai Tung is the least of my concerns," said Chan, who explained that using SCM money to purchase the building was at least connected to its intended housing use.

The SCM debacle, however, shows the serious flaws in the way Chinatown community benefits have been distributed and the lack of accountability of CCBA, which in several instances has

received them. The medical institutions, for example, made no effort to ensure that CCBA lived up to the agreement spelled out in the Memorandum after it received approval to move ahead with its projects. Nor has the Chinatown Neighborhood Council stepped into the breach to take a closer look at the issue. Other organizations in Chinatown - several of which have been vocal on issues such as the construction of a garage on Parcel C - have also declined to speak out forcefully against the misuse of the money. After receiving this community benefit, CCBA apparently determined that the SCM money belonged to



Inauguration of new CCBA officers, January 1998.

it rather than to the community.

## Some \$672,000 Was Spent

From 1991 to 1995, CCBA used some \$672,000 in SCM money to cover various expenses, according to financial statements filed with the state Attorney General's Division of Public Charities. CCBA transferred the following sums from the SCM account to be used for operating accounts and expenses from 1991 to 1995: In 1991 - \$156,887; in 1992 - \$88,903; in 1993 - \$87,358; in 1994 - \$110,199 (includes interest); and in 1995 - \$229,051 (includes interest). Between 1991 and 1995, the organization spent about \$650,108 in SCM funds. It is unclear if any of the funds transferred from the SCM account in 1994 and 1995 were spent on the purchase of Tai Tung Village, though CCBA's accountant, Gary Yee, and Chan said money used for that purpose would most likely not have been included in the SCM transfer figure.

In notes included in the statements, the accountants state that while the CCBA board said the SCM funds would be paid back to the SCM account when money becomes available, "the interfund loans are to be considered permanent transfers, principally because contemplated sources of funds for repayment are not readily available."

CCBA formally began dipping into the restricted funds in 1990 when the CCBA Council passed a resolution allowing interest from the funds to be used for specific purposes. Eventually CCBA began using the SCM rental income in addition to interest income in order to cover its own expenses. This money was used during the presidencies of Bing Wong, Paul Wong, and Reggie Wong. Wilson Lee says that during his administration SCM money was used only to repay loans taken out to purchase Tai Tung Village.

"Obviously, the diversion has gone much beyond current interest and clearly without Council approval," wrote Chan in 1994 after being elected CCBA's new auditor. In the same statement, Chan noted: "There has been talks within the community, even among those who represented CCBA in the negotiation with Tufts and NEMC, that CCBA ought to pay back the funds 'borrowed' from that account. There has been also talks of bringing CCBA to court on this if CCBA fails to do so." No action, however, has ever been taken on the matter to address the misuse of the money. Even after Chan brought out the fact that the money was being misused, the money continued to be spent at an even faster clip - doubling to a whopping \$229,051 in 1995 - during Reggie Wong's term as president and Chan's term as auditor.

Chan said that while the 70-member CCBA

Council apparently believes it can spend the money with impunity, no other community organizations or members have been surveyed to determine their views on the issue. Chan suggested that it was unclear if the CCBA Council speaks for the larger community on this issue. "It's up to the community and the Attorney General's office to decide whether they should pay back [the money]," Chan said.

One member of the community, who wished to remain anonymous, said the SCM money - if it had not been misspent by CCBA in the past - would have been available now to cover the initial costs of exploring ways to develop housing on Parcel C in Chinatown.

Chan said last month that "there was absolutely no way for us to know" how the money had been spent in previous administrations. He said some of the money was used during Reggie Wong's term to purchase Tai Tung Village, but he suggested that that sum would have been in addition to the money transferred to cover operating accounts and expenses. The money was obviously not used to maintain its building at 90 Tyler Street, which has had a serious water leakage problem and a poor heating system that has required employees of the Asian American Civic Association to use small electric heaters during the winter. Often circuit overloads regularly blow fuses. The building at 90 Tyler St. was purchased from the City of Boston for \$1 with the understanding that it would be used as a community center.

Wilson Lee, who was CCBA president from 1996 to 1997, said he didn't allow any SCM funds to be spent on CCBA expenses during his tenure. He said SCM money was only used to make payments on the \$500,000 bank loan taken out by CCBA to purchase Tai Tung Village. A second loan was also taken out after the first became due. He said CCBA only purchased the housing complex to help out the tenants, who "didn't want Boston Financial to have too much say in running Tai Tung Village." Lee said he had no choice but to spend SCM money to service the Tai Tung loan. "I had no choice. How are we going to pay the loan?" he said.

CCBA purchased Tai Tung Village in 1994 for more than \$800,000, financing the sale with a \$500,000 loan from the Shawmut Bank and an estimated \$350,000 in SCM income. According to CCBA officials, CCBA has no access to rental income from Tai Tung Village until the 40-year, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) low-interest mortgage expires in 2014.

"CCBA cannot touch any money from Tai Tung Village till 2014," Lee said. "I don't think CCBA's mission is to make money off that building." In theory, however, once the HUD loan is paid off in 2014, CCBA could earn profits from the building, though Lee argues the money would likely be reinvested to maintain the building.

Lee said that the money taken out of the SCM fund was "always considered a loan." He said the problem with earlier CCBA administrations was that they used the SCM money to cover operating deficits. He said they were living beyond their means, spending more money than they were taking in. "During my two years I was very very frugal with the money," he says, adding that SCM funds covered, among other things, overspending on a volleyball tournament during Reggie Wong's term. The quickest way to solve previous budget gaps was to dip into the SCM fund. "I'm not defending my predecessors," says Lee, who adds that "when CCBA has money they should pay all the money."

That, however, appears unlikely, since there currently appears to be no clear-cut mechanism to hold an organization like CCBA accountable for appropriately using a community benefit.

In 1994, Chan noted in a report on CCBA's finances that the account should have had about \$900,000 if money had not been diverted to other uses. The SCM account currently has \$75,472, according to newly elected CCBA treasurer Poy Ho, who said money from the account is now being used to repay the Tai Tung Village loan. He said he uses \$3,326 in SCM funds per month to repay the loan.

-Robert O'Malley



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## CALENDAR

**"That Gentleman From China":** April 23-May 3. At the Chinese Culture Institute's new Tremont Theater, 270 Tremont St., Boston. Performances are at 8 p.m. on April 23, 24, 30, and May 1, and at 2:30 p.m. on April 25, 26, May 2, and May 3. An original play by Doris Chu, directed by Alexander Chirkov, based on the true story of the first Chinese merchant who came to Boston in 1850, married an Irish woman, had four children, was a successful gentleman in Boston society, and returned to China in 1878. Produced by Asia on Stage/Chinese Culture Institute and the Chekov Theatre & Film Co. Tickets \$20; discounts available to groups, students and seniors. For info call 542-4599.

**12th Hai-Hwa Chinese Music & Dance Festival:** April 25 and 26, 7:30 p.m., Tsai Performance Center of Boston University, 685 Commonwealth Ave., Boston. Events include: Children Angel Chorus; "Little Deer and Their Angel" (an Operetta); Traditional Chinese Dance

Troupe; "The Goddess Strews Flowers" (A Chinese dance Drama). Donation \$10 per performance. For info and to order tickets call the American Chinese Art Society at (617) 332-5376 or (718)938-9900. Checks may be sent to 111 Truman Rd., Newton, MA 02159.

**APAAC Spring Strategy Summit:** Will Asian Pacific Americans Be Heard in 1998? April 25, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., UMass Boston, Chancellor's Conference Room, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston. Pre-registration required. Sponsored by the Asian Pacific American Agenda Coalition. For info call Hiep Chu at 287-5653.

**A Salute to Grandparents Day:** April 25, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Blue Hill Avenue Boys and Girls Club, 15 Talbot Ave., Dorchester. Music, games, prizes. A free event.

**Opera Gala:** April 19, 7:30 P.m., Jordan Hall. Performing will be soprano Guiping Deng, mezzo-soprano Gale Fuller, tenor Maxwell Li, baritone Ke-Qing Liu, and Pianist Long Wu.

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Applicants of color are strongly encouraged to apply. Please send resume and a letter of interest by May 1, 1998.



Carol E. Bonner, Associate Dean  
Simmons College School of Social Work  
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## HOME

# An Architect's View of Home Improvement

When homeowners decide they want to add a new room or renovate an existing one in their home, they often don't know where to start. Often they must decide whether to hire an architect or directly approach a contractor with their plan. They're the kind of issues that architect Edmund Chang must face all the time in his practice.

Homeowners considering renovations first need to ask themselves what they are trying to achieve, says Chang, a Harvard-educated architect who, along with his wife, Susan Sylligardos, operates the firm of Chang + Sylligardos.

Do they, for example, feel a room in the

there's no inherent conflict between what services an architect brings and what an owner should

talk to him on a limited basis and in the very worst case you'll leave with a greater sense of what your direction is," he says.

## Types of Renovations

Chang points out that home renovations, which are directly influenced by the economy, generally fall into three categories.

First, some renovations are undertaken by people who want more space but are unable to afford a larger house. One solution is to construct a new family room.

Second, outdated rooms - generally bathrooms and kitchens - are renovated by homeowners who are otherwise happy with their homes. Such renovations almost always add to the resale value of the house, he says.

Third, given the high cost of land, a family may purchase a modest house on a large piece of property, then extensively renovate the house, perhaps leaving only a fraction of the original intact.

Some people may add several thousand square feet. Chang says some people buy small houses and literally tear them down. They then rebuild on the site. Because the value of the new house will greatly exceed the value of the current house, it makes sense to tear it down, he says. "So we're seeing all different scales of renovation right now."

Once he has been hired for a project, Chang focuses his attention on assessing the needs of the client by posing alternatives and getting a sense of the client's lifestyle. Part of his work involves being an effective psychologist as well as a trustworthy agent.

"My partner is also my wife and so whenever we meet with residential clients, it's also a wonderful dynamic because oftentimes we're dealing with other couples," he says. And I think other couples sometimes have a greater ability to relate



Redesigned kitchen in the Yang and Koo residence. Design by Chang + Sylligardos Architects.

## The Sampan Feature

house is too claustrophobic and needs to be reorganized, or do they simply want to install a new window to bring in more light? A simple approach would be to hire a contractor to install the needed window, while homeowners with more ambitious plans could consider hiring an architect to help them bring a more coherent vision to their project, Chang says.

Chang points out that many homeowners often don't know exactly what they want, and that an architect can often help them clarify their ideas. "You may sit down with your spouse and may talk about that endlessly but have disagreement about what your priorities are and how much things are going to cost, how long is the construction going to take and what materials are available," he says.

While the architect can also give homeowners a rough estimate of the cost of a given project, more precise figures are generally only available from the contractor. "But those precise estimates are best based on drawings prepared by the architect and submitted to the contractor," Chang says.

"The architect is basically your agent," directing homeowners to resources and looking out for their interests as a member of a joint team, he adds. "So

desire."

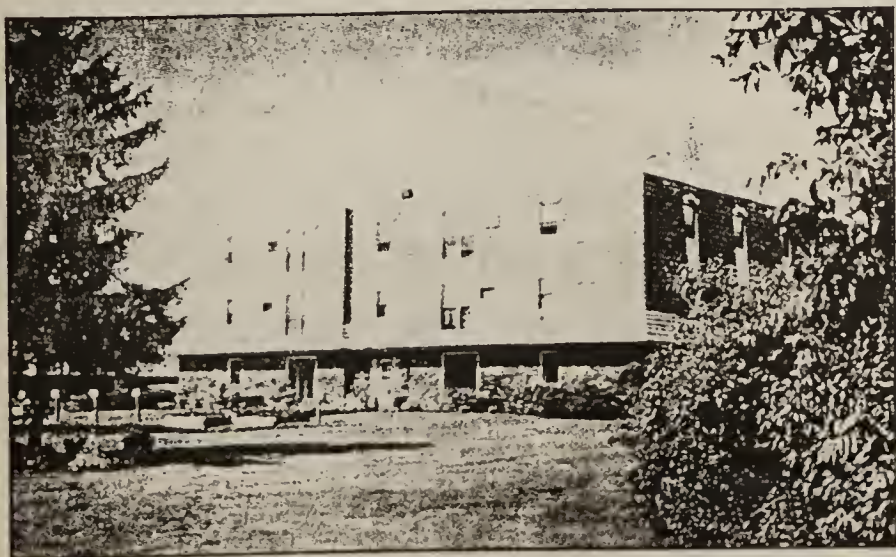
In general, an architect is paid based on the cost of the renovation. "The typical range would probably be between 10 and 15 percent of that final construction cost," he says. "It's within the owners' ability to control costs much more than they believe it is," he adds. "The architect is not going to force them to have granite (tiles) if they don't want granite."

For smaller contracts architects work on an hourly basis. If people are skeptical of the need to hire an architect for a modest home renovation such as the addition of a family room or the redesign of a kitchen, they could instead consider hiring an architect for perhaps five hours to prepare schematic sketches. Such drawings could give the owner a visual sense of a possible design, which could then be taken to the contractor. "It's certainly worth your very minimal investment to

continued on page 10

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## HOME

continued from page 9

to our firm, as a husband and wife, because there are sympathies that are shared."

"Our responsibility is very much to try to bring into reality those intangible descriptions of space that the owner can sometimes only in the vaguest terms describe. I think our own predilection is that it's very important to evaluate the quality of the light in the space." He says people often don't realize that the light of a space can be changed. "That is certainly one of the great things you can do," he says. "Manipulating walls and windows and surfaces and locations and the orientation of rooms can dramatically change the feel of the space, simply by manipulating the quality of the light."

And while many people living in the Northeast may be eager to use building materials that reflect the original design of the house, Chang points out that there is now a "wonderful variety of natural stones and materials and synthetic materials that lends a whole new experience to the space." He says he encourages clients to explore new color textures, wall materials, and floor surfaces. "There's an incredible range of materials out there that I don't often see in the average household," he says.

Chang points out that 95 percent of all houses have been designed by builders rather than architects. He believes that architects are not simply there to reinforce history, but also have been trained to "expand on it, to offer new possibilities." Clients who "are exuberant or excited about the visual or spatial possibilities" are an architect's best friends, he says.

Chang believes that architects and clients can be innovative in designing homes to fit the needs of today's lifestyles. "I'm a great believer in the development of vernacular building types, whether it's the salt box or the center hall colonial, or the arts and crafts house. I think they are wonderful inventions. And I think that they are completely appropriate for the time and period in which they were constructed. I also think they're completely appropriate for people who live in

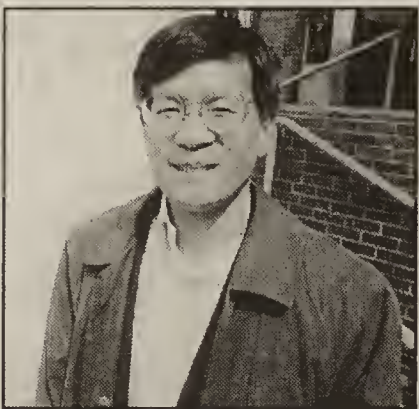
them today if they accept the kind of spatial boundaries that are offered to them by that particular house. But as the years go by inevitably tastes change; people have a different sense of hierarchy in their homes.

"There's a trend right now to much much larger homes, home offices, family rooms, three-car garages, all of which I don't think have much to do with the prototypical model of housing types that I just mentioned. And so consequently I think the biggest problem is when one tries to appropriate the old model and to reconfigure the natural internal organization of that house in such a way that it works better with today's lifestyle. So from the outside it looks like a center hall colonial but from the inside instead of having a center hall and two rooms to the right and two rooms to the left you go inside and you have a center hall and one huge family room/kitchen on the left and one huge multimedia room on the right.

"And I think there are real problems with that because I think it's a somewhat dishonest interpretation of what the historic model is. I also think that it leads to problems; it leads to shoe-horning certain types of spaces into conditions that are not necessarily beneficial to those spaces. So a family room/kitchen might be really really long, with actually no spatial differentiation between them. They may be oriented completely in the wrong direction.

"So I'm all for innovation in programming but I believe the house has to change its image with the programmatic development."

"A lot of time builders and developers accommodate current tastes of the new generation of home owners," he continues. "So they take a prototypical house model and they internally develop it in a way that I think is inappropriate. I have much less of a problem where a home owner lives in a house and loves it, except it doesn't quite meet their needs. And then I think an architect should be engaged" to find ways to rejuvenate the plan.



Architect Edmund Chang

Chang says his firm is currently working on a range of projects, including bathroom and bedroom renovations in the \$50,000 range. "We just completed a half-million renovation which is essentially taking a center hall colonial, gutting it and reconfiguring it," he explains, adding that he is also working on a large vacation house in British Columbia. "So there's a tremendous range of projects, which I guess goes to show that no project is too big or too small. In our firm, below \$50,000 is probably too small," he says. There are firms, however, that do smaller bedroom and bathroom projects in the \$7,500 range, he adds.

## Asian Influences on Architecture

Chang points out that many Asian families in the US have several generations living under one roof, which offers unique design possibilities to architects. Chang suggests that Americans can learn much from traditional Chinese housing styles such as the hutong. The American house is generally free-standing and isolated from its neighbors, but the hutong consists of several houses built in relation to each other. Americans, he says, tend to isolate themselves in the suburbs. "I think we're losing a sense of urbanity and a sense of community that you can achieve in the cities," he says.

Chang believes that architecture can, if used effectively, change social conditions, not just respond to them. "I truly believe architecture can promote certain types of relationships," he says.

Though Chang says he respects many of the principles of feng shui, he says his practice to date hasn't focused much attention on them. "I'm sympathetic to things (in feng shui) that make common sense," he says. Chang, for example, says he believes a person entering the front door of a house shouldn't be able to see out to the backyard. "I think that has an architectural basis as well as a basis in feng shui," he says.

Ideally, architecture and feng shui should complement each other, he says. Architects, he suggests, could "get direction from feng shui interpretation but express that in more architectural terms ... I think they are not inconsistent with each other for the most part."

-R.O.

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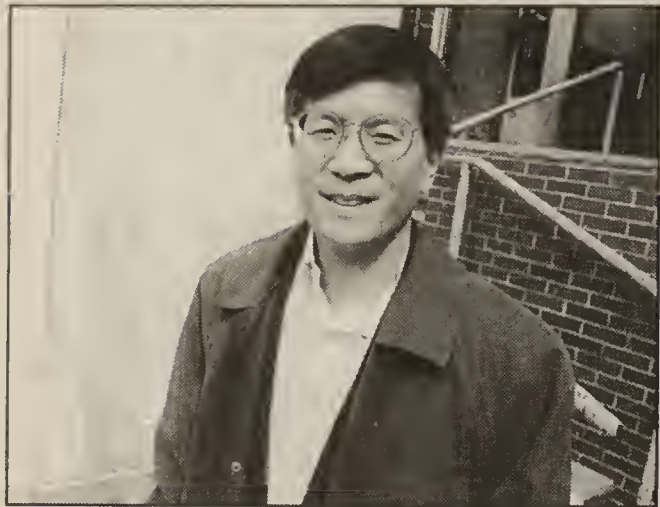
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# 居家生活與住房設計

## 訪建築設計師張樂仁

朱偉憶



建築設計師張樂仁 Edmund Chang

許多新移民來到美國是為了追求所謂「美國夢」，即有自己房子、汽車、產業，過更舒適的生活。作為一個發達國家，美國確實有豐富的物質資源供人民享受，但並非人人都能過上所謂的美好生活，尤其是美國時間不長的新移民，幾乎都需經過一段時間的奮鬥才能適應美國社會，這不僅是指經濟上達到自立或中上水準，也是指新來者的生活觀念和社會意識能否與美國環境相融合。中國俗語說：「人鄉隨俗」，然而漂洋過海來到一個陌生國家並受從東方到西方文化的巨大轉變，這過程的艱難卻並不那麼容易。外來移民在物質上實現了「美國夢」，思想意識與生活方式仍與美國社會格格不入者大有人在，如想真正適應這個國家，就要在福利制度、政治體系、就業求職、生意經營、購物行車等各方面多瞭解有關知識，在居家生活上也要向專業人士請教，學得美國化。而後者正是被許多人所忽視的。例如，許多人買了房子後搬進去就住，不管其內外裝飾是否適合自家生活習慣與需要，也有人需要翻修住房或購置日常傢俱物品，也往往不請設計師統一規劃，甚至不知道美國的家居設計專業人員是如何工作的。而我們認為這些知識對人人都有啟發性，因此專門訪問了華裔建築設計師張樂仁，請他向讀者們介紹一下民話設計在置業與日常生活的關係。

張樂仁指出，美國私人住宅房地產是國家經濟的大支柱，因而住房裝修布置也是個巨大的市場。作為一名專業設計師，他多年來為許多家庭設計了住房，也做過寫字樓等公共場所設計，而最擅長的還是單家庭屋等住宅的改建和內外裝飾。因為這也是目前最大的市場。他的設計公司平均每年要為五、六個家庭做改建設計，尤其是近幾年經濟形勢好，買房者很多，較普遍的項目有幾種，一是擴建房屋，例如在房內增加浴室、家庭室或臥室，或是室內增加陽台、門廳等；二是更新設備，如廚房、浴室的廚具浴器；三是拆舊建新。這些改建與時代發展、人們生活習慣改變、及經濟形勢有關。美國東北地區老式住房較多，其中又以殖民式最為常見，這說明民家還是喜歡和接受這些房屋形式的，但現代家庭對家庭娛樂享受等的要求更高，而老式住房往往只考慮居住實用，所以現在的人們常願意改建一間較大的家庭室供全家娛樂休閒之用，對浴室廚房的設備要求也今非昔比了，不光要實用，還要美觀能燃燒飯洗浴都變為享受。另外，還有不少改建項目不光是為了滿足居家生活的需要，也是為了房地產增值，這就是市場效應了。例如，聽說多一間浴室的房屋能升值不少，房主就願意花錢增建浴室。

至於為什麼在改建裝修時最好請專業設計師參謀，張樂仁表示：許多人也可以自己買傢俱窗簾壁紙，或者請家裝修公司施工，但有可能因缺乏統一規劃而使花了大價錢裝修的房屋反而不倫不類，住起來並不舒服，將來再售時也影響價格。他說建築設計師的職責首先是畫出形象的設計圖，請房主過目，裝修後的布局、色彩、採光等在圖上一目了然，主人不滿意可以修改，這種紙上談兵的預先設計是很必要的，可以防止費時費工費錢裝修完畢卻發現與想象的相差甚遠的情況發生。而一般建築公司卻是只施工並不提供圖紙，房主很難在完工前對設計方案心中有數。他指出，房主們可以請設計師提供設計，然後自行找施工公司和購置材料，也可以自始至終與建築公司合作，這時設計師將負責與建築公司協商、監督施工品質，並幫助尋找合適的材料。設計師的收費與工時和總裝修費用有關，工為裝修檔次越高，除了材料費昂貴外，設計師與建築工人也需付出更多的勞動。但設計師不會強迫客戶提高裝修檔次，因為設計水要與家庭的經濟力量和生活習慣相符合才能使客戶滿意，而讓顧客稱心如意是設計師服務的首要準則。另外，由於許多家庭改建住房時是根據財力與時間分期分批進行，如果沒有事先統一規劃，很可能今年修明年改，湊起來一看很不協調。在此情況下，房主也可向設計師請明自己的長遠打算，請專家畫出整體設計圖，至於實施施工則可按自家經濟情況分批進行，這樣只要每個局部都符合預先設計，哪怕是請不同公司施工或時隔幾年，也不會造成整體不匹配的感覺。

張樂仁認為，將居家環境設計得美觀舒適，又符合個人生活習慣，不僅能讓住在其中的人感到方便愉快，也是對身心健康有益。他說不少華人相信風水，現在不少西方人也對風水產生興趣，作為一個從小受美國教育長大的人，他覺得風水與風水學說是有其科學道理的。與建築設計理論也有不少相通之處。例如如風水講究房屋的大門、臥室門與後窗不要、線相通，若大門、臥室門與後窗都相通，則不聚財，而這種結構也是建築學上的忌諱，如遇到此需門內加隔扇、屏風等。另外建築師也避免在道路盡頭建屋，而風水上也將此類歸為不吉利的「路煞」。其實這些忌諱也是從人們長期生活經驗中得來，總是正對面而來的交通車輛，或是總是受室內穿堂風的侵擾，當然會對心理上產生壓力，對健康造成損害，也會影響事業與生活的順利發展。他表示自己雖是個現代化的設計師，但也對風水很有興趣，並在瞭解學習許多風水原理，例如鏡子傢俱的擺放等，這對進行設計也很有啟發。他表示對風水學說的理解是，有些人在選擇購屋時過份聽信風水先生的凶吉說，而放棄了合適的時機，他感到風水環境確實對居住有重大影響，但人們購屋時還得考慮房價、地點、校區等綜合因素，因此也不可不信。他還說風水雖有化解方法，但如要大興土木才可行，化凶為吉。也是不現實的。他認為，其實任何居住環境都是可以改造的，通過科學設計讓人們每日起居更加舒服以達到生活快樂、事業發達、益壽延年的目的，是風水先生們所期盼的，卻也正是建築設計師的職責。

父母來自中國上海，張樂仁是出生在美國的第一代華裔，早年的多年時光他是在美國東北部的紐約州、康州、麻州等地度過的，他說從小就對藝術、建築感興趣，他就著力往這方面發展。他先後在芝加哥的西北大學獲得城市規劃學士學位、及哈佛大學建築設計碩士學位，畢業後曾在波士頓的幾家建築設計公司實習了幾年，然後去加州開辦自己的設計公司，現在與他合開公司的台人既是他的妻子又是他哈佛建築系的同學，她是華裔美國人，夫婦二人分別具有建築與藝術發達的東西方文明古國的血緣，卻更多地将文化傳統融合於美國的現實生活與專業技術之中。他主說：「夫妻倆共同開業的另一好處是，我們的客戶大多數都是已婚夫婦，我們倆人一起與客戶交談，更便於瞭解男女雙方不同的需要和習慣，而對方因我們也是一對夫婦而比較容易信任我們，向我們袒露自己的生活情況，這對我們找到符合該家庭的設計方案很有幫助。」

美國人請專業設計師幫助進行室內外裝修設計是很普遍的，而生活在美國的亞裔們是否習慣這樣做呢？張樂仁表示他還是有不少亞裔客戶的，而一些亞裔不找設計師的原因有可能是想省些錢，但也有人是因為不知道去哪裡找或不瞭解設計師的作用到底如何。一些新移民認為只有很有錢的富人才請得起設計師，其實人們購買住房的費用是大項，裝修費相對來說就較小，而設計費在裝修費中佔的比例則更小，一般家庭都可承擔，如果為省小錢而糟蹋了大項當然更加不合算。專業設計師們既瞭解房屋特點與設計環境，又因見多識廣懂得裝修與房價及市場的關係，可以給客戶一些有益的建議，而許多房主本人卻往往顧及不到這麼多的方面。比如說，有的華人喜歡把房子裝修得有點東方味，但也應考慮到這是在美國，一家子主體結構是西洋式的，如果只室內屋外做點中式裝飾並不見得錦上添花，可能反而會顯得雜亂，還有若考慮到將來賣房，買主很可能不是華人，因此不喜歡這類風格，那麼花錢費力所做的裝修反而會影響房屋的價值。如果請專業設計師審視屋的價值，如果請專業設計師審視這類問題，尤其是對東方建築和亞裔生活方式有瞭解的專家，他們便會給出既不破壞屋屋風格，又符合主人風俗習慣的設計。

說到東方建築風格的特點，張樂仁認為，中國的古建築很有特色，但幾千年來變化很少，造成東方人都習慣化的眼光看中國建築，認為只要有飛檐書樓就是中國建築了。而西方建築則比較多變，各個時代都有其特點，就是民居也各有不同，美國的普通民居按房屋年代不同也有維多利亞式、殖民式、農莊式、現代式等之分，每種式樣都有其特點，因此等之可以並存。不過他並不贊成許多新建房屋的千篇一律，這是因為不少房屋開發商並非很好的建築設計師，得到一份圖紙便大批建造不求創新。目前不少準備新建房的客戶寧願請建築師特別設計，應該是很好的選擇。

他也談到華人中出過貝聿銘等著名建築師，但大多是按西方設計。當前西方文化大力侵蝕中國，他幾點東方味，但也應考慮到這是在美國，一家子主體結構是西洋式的，如果只室內屋外做點中式裝飾並不見得錦上添花，可能反而會顯得雜亂，還有若考慮到將來賣房，買主很可能不是華人，因此不喜歡這類風格，那麼花錢費力所做的裝修反而會影響房屋的價值。如果請專業設計師審視屋的價值，如果請專業設計師審視這類問題，尤其是對東方建築和亞裔生活方式有瞭解的專家，他們便會給出既不破壞屋屋風格，又符合主人風俗習慣的設計。

史·詩·小說  
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由北美華文作家協會紐英蘭分會主辦的「海華文藝季」史·詩與小說座談會暨書展將於四月二十五日星期六下午舉行，地點在哈佛大學燕京大禮堂。下午一時半開始書展簽名二時起座談會開始，主持與主講人有鄭愁予、趙樹理、張大春、李昂、瓦歷斯、諸幹、鄭洪等。以中文進行，免費入場。查詢請洽：張鳳凰(617)237-4680，鄭愁予(617)432-2934。



張樂仁為華人客戶設計的住宅外景

### 居家生活專刊

## 波城 司徒賢律師 華埠

WILLIAM W. SOOHOO ATTORNEY AT LAW

132 LINCOLN ST. BOSTON, MA 02111

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離婚  
移民案件：  
工作簽證  
勞工紙  
兼辦其它案件

司徒賢律師在全美十大法律學院，紐約大學畢業，是麻省、新澤西、紐約三州註冊執業律師。曾被香港(一週刊)、台灣(聯合報)、美國(世界日報)、(BOSTON GLOBE)、(SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE)訪問有關法律策略。



社區動態與簡訊

歡度祖父母節

為慶祝四月十六日至五月七日的少年兒童月，波士頓市長鄰區服務辦公室、波士頓反毒協會、藍山大道男女童俱樂部、多徹斯特家庭青年會共同舉行祖父母節聯歡，時間是四月二十五日星期六上午十一時至下午二時，地點在藍山大道男女童俱樂部15 Talbot Ave. Dorchester。歡迎祖父母及孫子女參加，有游藝、音樂、畫險、講故事、抽獎、飲食等，全部活動免費，此活動旨在加強祖孫間的聯係與交流。詳情可電：635-3485。

華美英語進階課程

自一九九三年起，華美福利會的英語進階課程已幫助八十餘人進入大專學習，更多的學生則成功地進入職業訓練班，從而獲得較好的就業機會。現華美福利會英語進階課程開始招募五月十二日班新生。有興趣者可前往波士頓泰勒街九十號參加考試，考試日期是四月二十七、二十八、二十九日上午九時至十一時三十分。圖為英語進階班部分師生



耆英會入籍班

大波士頓中華耆英會為五十五歲或以上的人士提供多種不同類型的服務及活動。最近新設入籍服務，如果你目前（一）擁有麻省政府福利；（二）在三年內可以合法申請入籍成為美國公民；（三）被政府取消各項聯邦政府福利。現在可參加由麻省難民移民辦公廳贊助中華耆英會所舉辦的各類中、英文入籍班、面試班和英文班，為入籍做好準備。新課將於九八年五月開課。所有課程費用全免。歡迎您在各中心報名註冊。地點如下：君子樓617-423-7260、康樂樓617-542-7458、白禮頓樓617-789-4289。有關詳情請聯絡耆英會梅麗梨小姐617-423-7560。

佛教教主聖誕慶祝

麻省菩提學會千佛寺於國曆五月三日（星期日）上午九時半至十二時慶祝教主釋迦牟尼佛聖誕，在千佛寺舉行浴佛儀式，歡迎各善信隨喜參加，獻花浴佛以此功德迴向世界和平、人民安樂、家道興隆。如需供齋，可至電617-773-7745。是日上午九時至九時半備有專車在市中心車站接送來寺。十二時備設午齋結緣。

基本勞工薪酬法例講座

由大波士頓法律援助處律師主講，旨在教育民眾基本勞工法例，解答最低工資、工人權益、勞工賠償等有關法律問題。時間是四月十八日星期六下午十二時半，地點在華人前進會工人互助中心，華埠夏里臣街三十三號，詳情可洽617-357-4499。

寧頓高中亞裔文化展

為慶祝五月「亞裔文化月」，寧頓高中亞裔學生聯誼會在寧頓市長辦公室、市醫院等協助下，於五月一日至五日每晚七時至八時半舉行活動，在該校禮堂上演「喜鈴」亞裔經歷，有傳統亞洲歌舞器樂、時裝秀等穿插劇中。演出票價預購五元，當場售票七元，詳情請購票電話：617-740-3231。

出版預告

下期《舢舨》將於一九九八年五月一日出版，需翻譯植字的廣告及社區活動欄消息請於四月二十四日前交本報處理，多謝合作。又本刊歡迎各界投稿、來信、及提供有關亞裔社區的消息。

HIV/AIDS Prevention & Education Planning for the City of Boston

The Boston AIDS Consortium, on behalf of the Boston Public Health Commission, invites Boston residents to apply for membership on the Boston HIV/AIDS Prevention Planning Group (BPPG). The BPPG is a community planning body that will develop and recommend the 3-year HIV/AIDS prevention and education plan for the City of Boston. Members serve on a volunteer basis; childcare and travel reimbursements available.

Initial term is 1 year, beginning May 15, 1998. Meetings are in English. Wheelchair accessible. Applications due May 4, 1998.

For application packet and information on the BPPG, contact the Boston AIDS Consortium, 140 Clarendon Street, Boston, MA 02116

BOSTON AIDS CONSORTIUM

(617) 867-0144 ext. 27  
Fax: (617) 424-6594

舢舨派報點一覽表

您可以在以下地點取得報紙：

舢舨報箱

1. 華美福利會 90 Tyler St.
2. 富利銀行 Beach St./Harrison Ave.
3. 紐英崙醫院 171 Harrison Ave.
4. 昆士小學 885 Washington St.
5. 平價市場 1120 Washington St.

波士頓區

1. 華人青年會 YMCA 54 Tyler St.
2. 世界書局 75 Kneeland St.
3. 先鋒電子公司 112 Beach St.
4. 華埠餐廳 262 Harrison Ave.
5. 新新市場 18 Oxford St.
6. 長江市場 73 Essex St.
7. 美東市場 109 Lincoln St.
8. 中國書店 44 Kneeland St.
9. 中華藝文苑 276 Tremont St.
10. 八八市場 50 Herald St.
11. 美洲銀行 17 Kneeland St.
12. 波士頓銀行 710 Washington St.
13. 波士頓華人佈道會 249 Harrison Ave.
14. 波士頓大學學生中心 775 Commonwealth Ave.
15. 南灣廣場 285 Tremont St.
16. 中華貿易大樓 2 Boylston St.
17. 波士頓公共圖書館 660 Boylston St.
18. 中華頤養院 120 Shawmut Ave.
19. 公路村 330 Tremont St.
20. ABCD 178 Tremont St.
21. 東北大學學生活動中心 360 Huntington Ave.

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- 中央昆士站  
沃樂斯特站  
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昆士中心市立圖書館  
40 Washington St.  
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奧士頓區

- 聯合看護中心 533 Cambridge St.  
金財餐廳 137 Brighton Ave.  
嘉華樓 181 Brighton Ave.  
中華耆英會 767 Cambridge St.

伯克萊區

- 伯克萊市立圖書館 可樂角分館  
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牛頓區

- 大波士頓文協 437 Cherry St.  
牛頓自由圖書館 320 Homer St.  
牛頓中文學校 21 Minot Place  
林園 10 Langley Rd.

劍橋區

- 哈佛燕京圖書館 2 Divinity Ave.  
麻省理工學院學生活動中心  
常熱飯店 1722 Mass Ave.

您可以前往以下圖書館閱覽室閱讀舢舨：

- 佛明漢市立圖書館 49 Lexington St.  
樂新頓市立圖書館 1874 Mass Ave.  
摩頓市立圖書館 36 Salem St.  
米頓市立圖書館 476 Canton Ave.  
物斯特市立圖書館 3 Salem Square  
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詳情請電 617-445-3413 查詢



女童軍夏令營地

開放日

【本報訊】女童軍(Girl Scout)是全美性的組織，專門為五至十七歲的女童及其家長們舉辦多種多樣的活動。女童軍夏令營地(Patriot's Lantern)是該組織在麻州舉行的夏令營地之一，該營地定於四月二十一日至四月二十五日舉行夏令營，並將於四月二十一日至四月二十五日舉行夏令營。夏令營期間，女童軍夏令營地將向公眾開放，家長和子女可以參加夏令營活動。夏令營活動包括：戶外活動、手工藝、音樂、舞蹈、遊戲等。夏令營期間，女童軍夏令營地將向公眾開放，家長和子女可以參加夏令營活動。夏令營活動包括：戶外活動、手工藝、音樂、舞蹈、遊戲等。

據女童軍社區外展經理維多利亞·馬提內斯介紹，參加女童軍夏令營活動的女孩及其家長並不希望女兒參加夏令營活動，但該組織也歡迎家長參加夏令營活動。夏令營活動包括：戶外活動、手工藝、音樂、舞蹈、遊戲等。夏令營期間，女童軍夏令營地將向公眾開放，家長和子女可以參加夏令營活動。夏令營活動包括：戶外活動、手工藝、音樂、舞蹈、遊戲等。

讀者園地

虎年虎話

黃劍奎

各種動物中，外表鮮麗，又最具威儀者，首推老虎。老虎有著威武外貌，柔軟優美的動作和美麗的虎皮。虎年是受人歡迎的一年。一般人對於老虎的用詞，多以形容英勇或危險處境，以下是以「虎話」為題的「虎言」。

(一)形容英勇、奮發之意者：  
虎虎生風。虎嘯風生。  
生龍活虎。將門虎子。  
龍驤虎步。虎父無犬子。  
上山打猛虎，下海擒蛟龍。  
不入虎穴，焉得虎子。  
虎為萬獸之王。

(二)形容危險狀況，惟尚未至絕境。含有「警告」之意：  
虎口餘生。談虎變色。

士頓地區有四處服務中心，並在絕大多數市鎮有義工服務，而當地設施遍佈。市鎮中更有約十處，女童軍主辦的夏令營活動，如今年八月下旬，在士頓地區舉行的夏令營活動，將向公眾開放，家長和子女可以參加夏令營活動。夏令營活動包括：戶外活動、手工藝、音樂、舞蹈、遊戲等。

騎虎難下。養虎為患。  
與虎謀皮。虎穴龍潭。  
有虎莫向虎山行。  
吊著老虎鬍子盪鞦韆。

(三)形容詞：  
馬馬虎虎。虎頭蛇尾。  
狐假虎威。虎視眈眈。  
虎毒不食子。  
苛政猛於虎。  
隔山觀虎鬥。  
虎落平陽被犬欺。  
一山難容二虎。  
畫虎不成反類犬。  
畫骨畫皮難畫虎，知人知面不知心。

(四)酒類：  
虎骨、虎皮、虎鞭，人們將虎骨製成藥，有虎骨追風散、虎骨跌打膏藥等。將虎骨或虎鞭以米酒浸泡，成為虎骨酒、虎鞭酒。

(五)曆史故事：  
有武松打虎等。

(六)人為的老虎：  
將某類人稱為「紙老虎」，另一類人有被指為「胭脂虎」。

另外，許多男人說：我家有一「母老虎」，人們在眾多寵物中，喜歡飼養貓狗作伴之外，成千上萬的家庭都有「母老虎」的存在，好像老虎與人有著特別的關係，無所不在。威勢的老虎按中國傳統是祥瑞的象徵，虎年有老虎在天下地之的象，大家會有一個安康的虎年，恭祝虎年佳運！

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Referral Instructions: Send cover letter with resume to Nancy Grimes, Manager of Human Resources, HDS, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138. EOE.

The Public Schools of Brookline, Massachusetts

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The Heath School is an outstanding school with a population of 400 students served by 60 professional and support staff. It is known for its rich academic program, instructional approaches and community spirit. The principal is the instructional leader and works collaboratively with staff, parents, students, the vice-principal and elementary curriculum coordinators to provide an environment that maximizes student academic achievement and personal development. Responsibilities also include supervision and evaluation, budget development and building management. Salary: \$73,000 to \$83,000. Available: July 1, 1998

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY K-12

The Director of Technology K-12 will oversee a comprehensive system-wide program which includes management and supervision of all instructional aspects of technology integration. The Director of Technology works closely with senior administrative staff, Principals, Curriculum Coordinators, library personnel and teachers toward the integration of technology into curriculum and instruction. The Director also supervises computer specialists and technicians; develops a system-wide budget consistent with educational goals; plans and implements professional development for staff and is responsible for seeking and acquiring grants which support the program. Salary to \$71,980. Available: July 1, 1998

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These positions require an undergraduate degree in a related field and a valid drivers license w/good driving record. To be considered for these opportunities, please send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to: Human Resources

Center for Health and Development, Inc., 100 Boylston St. Suite 1075, Boston, MA 02116.

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Asian American Bank & Trust Co.  
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發展C地段民意不可少

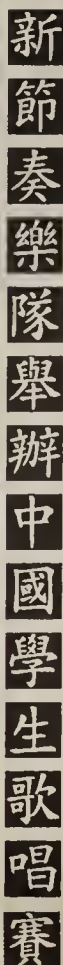
## C地段歷史回顧

談到C地段的開發，還得回顧一下有關歷史背景，以使不甚了解情況者也能掌握來龍去脈並積極關心此事進展。

C地段是波士頓中國城內的一塊地皮，位於屋街（Oak Street）二十四號與紐英崙醫療中心新樓之間，目前用作露天停車場。在六十年代，C地段原屬華埠社區，其上有若干建築，許多居民住於其中，在當年市區重建計劃影響下，上址的建築物遭拆毀，居民被迫遷移家園。此後，市政府曾一度將這塊地段賣給紐英崙醫療中心。

一九八七年紐醫建議在C地段上興建有六百個車位的多層停車場，遭華埠社區居民抗議，波士頓重建局也以住房與社區發展是優先項目為由反對紐醫的該項建議。一九八八年，市重建局與紐醫達成協議，准其在華埠華盛頓街購買兩塊土地並以C地段為交換歸還給市府作社區發展用地。紐醫後來在購得的華盛頓街土地上新造了高層新樓，目前樓頂還設救護直升機起降坪。

在一九八九年至一九九二年之間，波士頓重建局與六個社區團體及華埠社區議會共同設計發展與集



爾，二家協商並達成共識，要求華埠社區同意他們在C地段興建一座四百五十五個車位的多層停車場，交換條件是償付給華埠一百八十萬元資金或者一萬平方英尺建築作社區中心之用。數年前遭一致否定的停車場方案陳渣泛起，不同的是此次不僅市重建局出謀，華埠社區議會等主要社團也表示贊同，原因是那一百八十萬元交換金，誰個不是見錢眼開？

但立場堅定者大有人在，建造大型停車場既霸佔了應做社區發展之用的地段，又會給華埠帶來交通擁擠、空氣污染等危害，因此絕大多數民眾決反對。在其後的兩年間，以保衛C地段聯盟為首，華埠社區開展了聲勢浩大的反對紐醫在C地段建停車場的運動，多次示威遊行、民眾大會、全民投票，請願簽名等活動的熱鬧場面，至今在許

C地段得而不可復失

然而，三四年時間過去，中華公所已換了三任主席，C地段的開發仍是光打雷不下雨，當然實際難題是光有地不夠，還得有錢，才能在地皮上建造起樓房來，但如果不得具體開發方案一步步做起，以籌得足夠的建設資金，C地段的發展只是空談。因而難免有些當年贊成用C地段去換紐醫那一百八十萬元的人會幸災樂禍講風涼話。

市政府與重建局對C地段的開發是有規定期限的，如果五年內不動工，市府有權收回該地另作它用。難道社區希望往年的舊戰再度重演？因此當務之急是盡快制定C地段開發方案、籌措資金、將施工計劃付諸實現。對C地段發展最為關心焦急的莫過於當年領導和領袖，他們不甘心讓大家歷盡千辛萬苦爭回的寶地再度失去。一九九七年，

### C地段應做何用

今年初，市重建局宣佈發出地段投標計劃書，以問卷調查及居民大會的形式徵求民眾意見，迄今

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# 美國流行樂壇的亞裔樂手

與胡弼文

朱偉憶譯

## 封面故事

這是一個星期二的晚上，在位於薩莫威的戴維斯廣場的一家夜總會里，領銜表演的是華裔歌手蘇永斌 (Kevin So)，他既是吉它手也是歌手，還朗誦詩、演奏激昂或柔和的藍調與鄉村音樂。

這天晚上與蘇永斌同台演出的是一位已錄制過光碟的爵士樂演奏家，他彈奏從古典樂到爵士樂的各種曲調。

蘇永斌是波士頓地區少有的幾位亞裔爵士與鄉村樂演奏家之中的兩位。儘管多數人認為亞裔更偏愛經典音樂，也有越來越多的亞裔樂手向較現代的音樂挑戰。

### 開創新紀元

二十七歲的蘇永斌既編歌又演唱，他是屈指可數的在夜總會和全美巡迴演出藍調與鄉村音樂的華裔之一。這位在波士頓的奧斯頓區長大的華裔青年是位天生的音樂家，他畢業於南加州大學音樂專業，他說音樂一直是生活的一部分。他還記得小時候隨家長到唐人街飲茶，當人們之間意見相異時，他聽見父親唱中文歌使

大家開心。這使他感到：「音樂有種醫治心靈的功能。」

蘇永斌十六歲起開始彈吉它和唱歌，但他最初對流行音樂的興趣可追溯到七十年代末的黑人音樂。他那時買了生平第一盤音樂帶，當他在表兄家第一次聽到麥可·傑克遜演唱時是多麼激動。他說最初是音樂的節奏使他入迷，這些樂曲可以載歌載舞，聽到音樂就可隨之起舞。

但隨後蘇永斌受到其他音樂的影響，尤其是美國卓越歌手及歌曲創作包博·戴蘭 (Bob Dylan) 的樂曲，改變了他的生活。蘇永斌說自己在幾方面認同戴蘭，他是失落者歌聲的代表。作為一名在美國長大的亞裔，蘇永斌有時會感到自己是外人，是弱者，因為你不如別人個大強壯，所以會覺得自己處於劣勢。而戴蘭則是個小個子，一點不強壯，因此他代表弱者和外人唱出的歌聲更能引起蘇永斌的共鳴。

蘇永斌表示，在這個國家里種族問題不可避免，儘管人們告訴他不要在意，「我仍然無時不刻感到它的存在。」

他回憶說不久前他在街上遇到兩個持盤乞討的白人向他索錢，當他沒給他們錢時，他們變用種族污辱語言罵他。他並沒有惹他們，人們說美國的種族關係變得好了，但他時時對此懷疑。

他說許多郊區白人社區的美國人仍不與少數族裔接觸，不知如何與亞裔或非裔交往。白人孩子也喜歡聽黑人音樂，卻不知如何與黑人往來。而某種隔閡現象也會發生在唐人街，那里的人們自我封閉不與非華人接觸。他認為美國的種族隔閡常產生自缺乏瞭解，並導致彼此之間的懼怕與仇恨，從而又使人們更加隔絕。

蘇永斌不是那種把自己封閉在本族裔中的人，他喜歡美國的多元化。他最好的朋友就有一名亞裔、一名黑人和一名白人。他在夜總會演唱時聽眾則以白人和亞裔為多。在他成長過程中總有不少華裔朋友，但他也喜歡與其他族裔交往。他說：「我從來不把自己封在華人圈子裡。」就是現在，他也覺得與他的三個朋友一起在街上走很帶勁，沒有人是外人。

他的歌曲也傳達了同樣的感受，在他的歌曲光碟《個人》中，他表達了人們彼此相愛而非相害的重要性：「只因我的頭髮長點／只因我的膚色深點／只因我的眼睛小點，誰就該審視我；我看見白種人在中間／黑種人在左邊而黃種人在右邊／雖然他們是三位強壯的個人／他們肩並肩站在一起將會更強壯。」

蘇永斌以音樂為專業生涯，靠音樂謀生，他在全國巡迴，在從東到西，從南到北的各州的夜總會、俱樂部中演唱，但他仍有不可虛度時光的緊迫感。他白天並無職業，但以音樂家為業並不容易。「我能夠生活，我幹得相當努力。」

盡管他相信種族與他的音樂創作並無關聯，但他仍感到亞裔要成為音樂家需付出更多努力。有位朋友曾告訴他現在是關鍵時刻：「因為你是亞裔，你必須加倍努力。」

他表示：「這需經受時間的考驗，這是在白人的世界，總得經過這種過程。」但他不會停止，「我看見未來的光明。」他在本地的一場俱樂部演出，觀眾近一半是亞裔，但他仍渴望能有更多的亞裔支持欣賞現場演唱的音樂並常出來到俱樂部聽他和其他歌手演奏。他讓非亞裔觀眾聽他唱的歌，藍調並創作歌當作義不容辭的責任。當人們傾聽他演唱並認出他是華人時，他感到興高采烈。

迄今，蘇永斌錄制出版過兩盤光碟，已被人們收藏家中。「我大概是他們的光碟收藏中唯一的華人。」據他所知全美另外只有兩名亞裔：一名

在舊金山，一名在紐約；演奏與他類似的音樂。人們傾向於稱他作「鄉村歌手」，但他卻不這樣為自己定位。因為他不想把自己限在一種類型內。他甚至考慮在自己的歌中加入其他風格看看效果如何。他很樂意坐在喬丹廳內聽古典四重奏或是在教堂聽唱聖歌。他拉過六年小提琴並仍熱愛古典音樂。古典音樂需要嚴格訓練，而他相信人生的長期成功需要嚴格訓練。

要讓父母相信自己選擇的專業生涯是正確之路並不容易。蘇永斌的父母都是出生在中国的移民，在波士頓北郊林恩鎮經營餐館已二十五年，他們都不贊賞小兒子伴隨美國音樂長大並決心成為樂手。他母親經常以懷疑態度告誡他這種音樂要麼成功很難，因為他是華人，還批評他唱歌的聲調，有些批評真令他難以接受。

「我媽說：『我就是不喜歡這種音樂。』」雖然在過去的這些年里，他的父母經常在經濟上資助他，他們卻並不真正同意他的專業選擇。他表示父親倒是支持他，但卻寧願他演其他種類的音樂。他的父母聽中國流行歌曲，「那是他們從童年起就聽的音樂」，他說：「人們常會中意他們青少年時所熟悉的音樂。」

他認為在他成長的華人社區中，所謂「成功」的概念常指財經上而不是藝術上的成就。在他的家中，與當醫生的哥哥和在銀行任職的姐姐相比，蘇永斌的專業選擇最不被看好。因此他有些無奈地表示：「在我長大的社區中，所謂成功就是指能掙多少錢。因此我必須不斷提醒自己要這種成功只是人言而已。」

### 晝夜兼雙職

像其他亞裔音樂家一樣，低音樂手 Jeff Song 知道在波士頓地區要靠音樂謀生是多麼艱難。作為一名、自學成才、的研究科學家，他白天在劍橋區一家生化公司上班，晚上卻是名音樂家同蘇永斌一起在夜總會演出。

Song 是位韓國裔，一九八二年從愛荷華州來波士頓，在波士頓大學讀人類學並在紐英倫音樂學院學音樂。他迄今已經錄制了五盤光碟，把他即興演奏式的音樂被稱為「標新立異的爵士樂」。他認為這種稱呼只是為了迎合採購口味的需求，他在爵士樂和搖滾樂隊中演奏，一度曾單靠音樂謀生，經常參加婚禮樂隊演奏，但他表示自己對此不滿足。

七年前他的妻子回學校讀書，為了養家他除了找份日間工作別無選擇，而隨著他的第一個孩子出世，他更需要白天全職上班。

Song 表示：「我感到自己一生一直在日間工作與音樂之間搏鬥。」他八歲開始練鋼琴，上四年級起學大提琴，在學了經典音樂之後，他於七

十年代末起開始彈低音吉它。像許多年輕的亞裔音樂家一樣，學習經典音樂是受父母之命，而發展流行音樂卻是自然的召喚。

對我父母那代人來說，經典音樂才是正當合理的。他說對他那出生於韓國的雙親來說，如果上朱麗亞音樂學院並成為另一個馬友友則可能是好事，但演奏搖滾樂和爵士樂卻出了格。在做選擇時真是很痛苦為難。回顧家庭對他搞流行音樂的阻力，他感到如果父母支持的話，下一代會更加成功，如果他的兒子想當音樂家的話，他一定會全力支持。

Song 說多年來，他的父母逐漸習慣了他對電子音樂的愛好，而這愛好卻正是他最新音樂成就的動力。這種成就旨在顯示「亞裔美國人對任何形式的音樂都在做出真正的貢獻。」去年，他創辦了首屆波士頓亞裔音樂節，今年秋天此活動將再次在劍橋市多元文化藝術中心舉行。雖然去年秋季的音樂節演出的參加者多數是亞裔，也有受亞洲音樂形式影響的非亞裔音樂家參與。Song 認為所演奏的樂曲與精神其實比演奏者本身的種族更為重要。

他指出，該亞裔音樂節並非世界性的音樂節。儘管將不演出具亞洲文化特點的傳統節目，卻並不排斥使用傳統亞洲樂器或音樂形式。他說此音樂節的宗旨在於「給予那些著力體現自身個性即來自亞裔經歷的音樂引起爭議的演奏者們表演機會，另一個目的是要打破膚色界限並向如何劃分種族的文化觀提出挑戰。」

具諷刺性的是，這個音樂節的亞裔標籤卻嚇跑了一些亞裔音樂家，他們說不想參與具有「種族特性」的活動。音樂家們願意被認為是超出其種族特征的優秀樂手。

談到該音樂節時，Song 表示，「坦率地講，我仍不能確定這是好事還是相反。」因而他們心自問一個亞裔的集會到底是否幫助亞裔擺脫還是永遠陷於其與眾不同的形象。同時，他又相信為本地亞裔音樂家們提供演出機會已經是舉辦此音樂節的充足理由。他說：「如果是在一個完美社會不存在種族問題，我們倒不必要有亞裔音樂節了。」

如蘇永斌一樣，他也認為種族問題困擾亞裔時也影響亞裔音樂家。雖然許多人認為種族關係已向好的方面改變，他卻並不信以為真。他說：「我並不覺得有多大改變。」並批評說最近電網網絡媒體的新聞中曾有大標題指花樣滑冰選手關穎珊不是美國人，他對此很不以為然。蘇永斌曾為關穎珊所受的不公平說寫了歌曲。

人卻都從他們在亞洲國家或美國成長的經歷歷史獲得靈感。Song 認為蘇永斌和許多本地亞裔樂手就是例子。

Song 表示：儘管蘇永斌那樣的亞裔鄉村樂手確實寥寥無幾，但亞裔爵士樂手卻不少見，部分原因是許多日本音樂家來波士頓伯克利音樂學院學習。他認為近年來亞裔樂手增加是件好事，這使種族問題不像以往那麼突出了。雖然亞裔進入如搖滾和hip-hop 等流行歌曲領域比較慢，但也有些例外，如兩位日裔女樂手錄制了hip-hop 樂帶，但長期存在的一種危機是主流音樂界會把亞裔音樂家形象塑造得標新立異。因此他呼籲：「是否能夠只用好演奏家和好藝術家來評論音樂家，而超越標新立異形象呢？」他表示與眾不同可能為演奏家帶來好處，但同時又是種甘苦正負共存的認識。

### 爵士女樂手

對爵士樂手王麗清 (Jane Wong) 來說，身為亞裔的事實對她的音樂並無影響。在她成長過程中，當她聽見唱京劇時就會起雞皮疙瘩並拒絕接受她祖先遺產的某些方面。她說：「我認為不少華人厭恨中國文化，許多是由於中華文化中對待婦女的方式造成。」她表示這種感覺一方面來自父母的影響，她的父母於四十年代來美國，是走出封建家庭的叛逆型中國青年，曾很厭惡家中的封建禮教。另一方面，她是從一些中國電影中見到那些封建文化，感到很壓抑。然而她也表示雖然她仍有這種疑問，近期她觀看了爵士樂手 Fred Ho 的演出卻使她開始以不同觀念思考中華文化藝術。她說：「我開始感到其中有些我喜愛的東西，當我在紐約觀看 Fred Ho 的演出時，那里有位中國歌手，我確實喜歡那種演唱。」

王麗清表示華人家庭常對音樂在孩子們生活中的地位懷有複雜的意見。「我哥哥嫂嫂很想讓他們的孩子學音樂如小提琴鋼琴，但似乎上不了課，讓你在這方面成為專業人才。」雖然經典音樂通常被華裔接受，像馬友友那樣的音樂家受到高度尊重，但爵士樂與搖滾樂仍被視為歪道。她說：「為經典音樂是更屬於白人和上流社會，然而根生於美國通俗文化；許多是根植於黑人音樂形式的歌曲；就被質疑。」她指出白人家庭對自家孩子想成為搖滾歌星也會持與華人相同的異議。她說母親一直不理解她，她感到我以此謀生很靠不住。她有一套何種職業更受敬重的觀念。音樂主界好像離不開毒品和酒精，中國文化也按某些音樂類型來為人分等級。畫家受到尊敬，而音樂家簡直像妓女或流浪漢。

從小學彈鋼琴，大學里學的是電腦科學，畢業後，王麗清曾當過幾年軟件工程師，最後從事於電影製



